


County of Contra Costa
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 14, 2008

TO: All Unrepresented County Employees

FROM: John Cullen 
County Administrator

SUBJECT: HEALTHCARE BENEFIT UPDATE – BENEFIT DESIGN TASK FORCE

As you'll recall from earlier OPEB information (www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/index.asp?nid=1318.) a Healthcare Benefit Design Task Force was created to develop recommendations for our future Health Benefit Program that will maximize benefit choices/options with our subsidy amounts. The Task Force was developed as part of our OPEB plan to balance our requirement to provide public services with competitive healthcare benefits for our employees (now and when they retire). Our Healthcare Benefit Design Task Force has been launched. This memo will be the first communiqué to keep all of us up to date on progress in developing new healthcare benefit options.

- *What is the charge of the Healthcare Benefit Design Task Force?*

The job of the Task Force is to develop recommendations to the County Administrator on healthcare plan options for employees and retirees in unrepresented classes. The Task Force will be analyzing and evaluating the county's existing healthcare benefit structure; determining healthcare needs of county employees; exploring cost effective alternative plans; and developing recommendations for the design of competitive, cost effective and customized healthcare benefit plans.

- *Who serves on the Task Force?*

The Task Force is made up of management employees from throughout the county that have applied and been nominated by their department heads. An experienced health plan design facilitator has been engaged to lead group discussions on the work of the Task Force. Outside experts will be brought in as necessary to present OPEB, healthcare cost and specific plan option information as needed.

- *What is the timeline for the Task Force?*

Meetings of the Task Force are being held twice per month through December 2008. Recommendations for plan options are expected in early 2009. Information on these options will be shared with all of us as they are developed; and when approved incorporated into open enrollment materials in 2009, to be effective January 1, 2010. Elimination of dual coverage and required Medicare Part B enrollment prior to age 65 for us, will be incorporated into our existing plans effective January 1, 2009, as part of our policy changes effective May 6, 2008.

- *How will we keep staff informed of the discussions and progress towards our goal?*

Minutes will be summarized and posted on our internet site every month. Periodic FAQs will be sent out as additional questions are received by the Task Force or at our OPEB email address (OPEB@cao.cccounty.us). We continue to encourage county employees and retirees to submit questions for healthcare design considerations to our site.